

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-07

NSC-10 SPC-03 SAM-01 SS-20 RSC-01 L-03 PA-04 PRS-01

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 OMB-01 CPR-02 DRC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 143

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

COMUSJAPAN FUCHU JA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 2344

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JA

SUBJECT: FONMIN OHIRA DIET RESPONSE ON EMPEROR VISIT

1. FONMIN OHIRA READ STATEMENT AT OPENING OF LOWER HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE SESSION AFTERNOON FEBRUARY 20, EXPRESSING REGRET FOR EMBARRASSMENT HE CAUSED IN VARIOUS QUARTERS WITH WASHINGTON PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT ABOUT VISIT OF EMPEROR TO US. ADMITTING THAT HE HAD BEEN CARELESS (IN PRESS APPEARANCE) OHIRA DENIED CATEGORICALLY THAT HE HAD EVEN TOUCHED ON QUESTION OF TIMING OF EMPEROR VISIT IN DISCUSSIONS WITH SECSTATE KISSINGER.

2. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS WHICH FOLLOWED, FONMIN OHIRA REPLIED THAT GOJ WOULD CAREFULLY STUDY QUESTION OF VISIT TO US BY EMPEROR AND EMPRESS. IN KEY EXCHANGE WIDELY REPORTED BY PRESS, ZEMMEI MATSUMOTO (JCP) ASKED WHETHER HE MEANT THAT THERE IS CLEAN SLATE NOT ONLY WITH RESPECT TO TIMING BUT ALSO TO THE EMPEROR'S VISIT ITSELF. FONMIN OHIRA RESPONDED SIMPLY QTE YOU ARE RIGHT UNQTE.

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3. MATSUMOTO REPHRASED QUESTION, NOTING THAT JOINT COMMUNIQUE

ISSUED IN WASHINGTON LAST SUMMER AT CONCLUSION OF (TANAKA-NIXON) SUMMIT TALKS STATED ONLY THAT US SIDE HAD EXPRESSED DESIRE TO HAVE EMPEROR VISIT US (SIC) BUT NOT THAT GOJ HAD ACCEPTED. MATSUMOTO THEN ASKED AGAIN WHETHER SLATE IS BLANK ON VISIT ITSELF AS WELL AS TIMING. AGAIN, FONMIN OHIRA REPLIED QTE YOU ARE RIGHT UNQTE. PRESS ALSO QUOTED MOFA SOURCES WHICH EXPLAINED THAT FONMIN OHIRA MEANT THAT THERE ARE NO REPEAT NO SPECIFIC PLANS ON DATE OF VISIT, BUT THAT FONMIN HAD NOT REPEAT NOT RULED OUT EXPECTATION OF VISIT ITSELF.

4. PRESS COMMENTED THAT FONMIN RESPONSE IN DIET WOULD PROBABLY CAUSE DOUBTS ON US SIDE, WHICH WAS SAID TO CONSIDER THE QUESTION OF THE EMPEROR'S VISIT AS ALREADY BEING DECIDED UPON.

5. DURING LUNCHEON CONVERSATION FEBRUARY 21 AMERICAN AFFAIRS BUREAU DIRGEN OKAWARA CALLED CHARGE'S ATTENTION TO FONMIN OHIRA'S STATEMENTS AND CONFIRMED THAT FONMIN HAD IN FACT TAKEN POSITION THAT THERE IS NO AGREEMENT BETWEEN JAPAN AND US EITHER ON WHETHER OR WHEN AN IMPERIAL VISIT WILL TAKE PLACE. OKAWARA EXPRESSED HOPE THAT USG WOULD NOT FEEL COMPELLED TO MAKE ANY STATEMENTS ON THIS MATTER WHICH WOULD SEEM TO CONTRADICT POSITION FONMIN OHIRA HAS NOW TAKEN.
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